

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL MILAN

TO AMEMBASSY ROME

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IT

SUBJECT: JUNE 15 ELECTION OUTLOOK AS SEEN ON JUNE 12

REF MILAN 1018

1. WE HAVE CONDUCTED A LAST MINUTE TELEPHONE SURVEY OF OUR CONTACTS THROUGHT OUT LOMBARDY AND THE VENETO WHICH WHILE HARDLY COMPLETE PROVIDES A USEFUL LOCAL CHECK ON IMPRESSIONS IN MILAN.

2. OUR CONTACTS TEND TO CONFIRM OUR JUNE 6 REPORT.

3. DC LOSSES ARE NOWHERE EXPECTED TO BE MORE THAN ONE OR TWO PERCENTAGE POINTS EXCEPT IN MANTUA WHERE PARTY HAS BEEN SPLIT BY DEFECTION (BUT NOT TO LEFT) OF MAJOR VOTE GETTER. DC IS THOUGHT TO BE PICKING UP VOTES FROM PLI, PSDI AND MSI. ON THE OTHER HAND LOSSES OF ONE OR TWO SEATS IN CITY COUNCILS DISTINCTLY POSSIBLE AND IN CLOSELY BALANCED CITIES THIS WILL BE IMPORTANT.

A. PCI EXPECTED TO MAKE ONLY MINOR GAINS BUT TAKEN WITH PSI SUFFICIENT TO AFFECT COMPOSITION OF SOME LOCAL GOVERNMENTS.

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B. PSI STILL EXPECTED TO GAIN marginally, BUT

PICTURE IS UNEVEN WITH SOME SIGNS THAT PSI IS BEING HURT BY LAW AND ORDER ISSUE.

C. PRI GENERALLY MAKING GOOD SHOWING WITH BETTER THAN AVERAGE CANDIDATES AND SOMETIMES TAKING A MORE LEFT THAN CENTER POSITION. EXPECTED TO GAIN BUT REMAIN SMALL ALTHOUGH IN MILAN, VENICE AND POSSIBLY ELSEWHERE COULD BECOME KEY TO FORMING NEW MAJORITY COALITIONS.

D. PLI AND PSDI EXPECTED TO DECLINE.

E. MSI, EXCEPT IN VERONA, EXPECTED TO DECLINE.

4. WHILE NATIONAL AVERAGES WILL BE TAKEN AS MEASURE OF NATIONAL POLITICAL EQUILIBRIUM, IMPACT AT CITY AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL COULD BE EQUALLY IMPORTANT. SMALL SHIFT IN PERCENTAGES WILL IN SOME CASES CHANGE MAJORITIES IN THESE GOVERNMENTS AND, CONSEQUENTLY, WHOLE PATRONAGE PATTERN, WITH ALL THAT MEANS IN LONGER TERM. THAT IS, EVEN MINOR DC LOSSES MAY WELL RESULT IN PCI OR PSI ENTRY TO LOCAL JUNTAS. IN MOUNTAIN AREAS OF BELLUNO, FOR EXAMPLE, DC NOW HAS EXCLUSIVE CONTROL IN 85 COMMUNES. BUT COMBINED PCI, PSI, PRI, PSDI TICKET THREATENS TAKE OVER 20 OF THESE.

5. GENERALLY AGREED THAT FORMATION OF NEW MAJORITIES WILL BE LONG AND PAINFUL WITH OUTLOOK IN VENICE AND MILAN ESPECIALLY OBSCURE.

6. SURPRISINGLY, ECONOMIC ISSUES NOT GIVEN MUCH PROMINENCE BY OUR CONTACTS WHICH, IF TRUE, CERTAINLY WILL HELP DC AND CONSTITUTES MAJOR THURN AROUND IN LAST QUARTER.

7. LAW AND ORDER, ON OTHER HAND, IS BIG ISSUE ALMOST EVERYWHERE AND IS HELPING DC TO DETRIMENT PCI, PSI AND MSI. PORTUGUESE SITUATION IS ALSO LOW KEY BUT PERVASIVE PLUS FOR DC.
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8. IMPORTANCE OF HELD NOSE VOTE FOR DC CONTINUES TO BE EVIDENT AND COULD GIVE DC BETTER THAN NOW EXPECTED RESULT. WORTH NOTING, FINALLY, THAT DC HAS PRETTY MUCH BECOME MAIN TARGET FOR ALL PARTIES SO THAT IF IT HOLDS ROUGHLY PRESENT SHARE OF VOTE, INTERPRETATION WILL BE ONE OF RELATIVE DC SUCCESS.FINA

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